

AO 91 (Rev. 01/09) Criminal Complaint

SL/CS

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the  
Southern District of Ohio

United States of America  
v.  
Menelik Solomon

Case No. 2:22-mj-718

Defendant

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date of 11/01/2022 in the county of Franklin in the Southern District of Ohio, the defendant violated 18 / 21 U. S. C. §924(c) / §846, an offense described as follows:

- 21  
18 U.S.C. § 846 Conspiracy to Possess With the Intent to Distribute a Controlled Substance, and  
18 U.S.C. § 924(c) Possessing a Firearm in Furtherance of a Drug Trafficking Crime

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See Attached Affidavit.

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.

Tisha Hartsough  
Complainant's signature

Tisha Hartsough, FBI  
Printed name and title

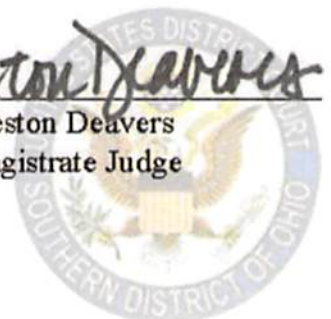
Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Via FaceTime

Date: November 2, 2022

City and state: Newark, Ohio

Elizabeth A. Preston Deavers  
United States Magistrate Judge



**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF CRIMINAL COMPLAINT AGAINST:**

**MENELIK SOLOMON, TEDDY ASEFA and KFLEGEWERGES ABATE**

I, Tisha M. Hartsough, a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, hereinafter referred to as the affiant, being duly sworn, depose as follows:

**INTRODUCTION**

1. I have been employed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for approximately 21 years. I am assigned to the Columbus Resident Agency, Cincinnati Division, where I have investigated violations of many State and Federal laws, including crimes of violence, kidnapping, drug trafficking, money laundering, public corruption and civil rights and crimes related to terrorism. Relative to this affidavit, I have been trained to investigate and have directed and participated in numerous drug trafficking and firearms investigations. Based upon the allegations in this affidavit, as well as my training, experience and my review of the evidence gathered by investigators assigned to this investigation, there is probable cause to believe that **Menelik Solomon, Teddy Asefa and Kflegewerges Abate** have committed violations of: 21 U.S.C. § 846, Conspiracy to Possess with the Intent to Distribute a Controlled Substance and 18 U.S.C. § 924(c) Possessing a Firearm in Furtherance of a Drug Trafficking Crime.

**PURPOSE OF AFFIDAVIT**

2. The facts and information contained herein are based on my personal knowledge and experience, that of other law enforcement personnel, police reports, and other documents, as well as from persons with knowledge regarding the relevant facts and sources of information that have been proven reliable. This affidavit is intended to show only that there is sufficient probable cause for the requested complaints and arrest warrants and does not set forth all of my knowledge about this matter. This affidavit is being submitted in support of criminal complaints against, and for the purpose of obtaining arrest warrants for, **Menelik Solomon, Teddy Asefa and Kflegewerges Abate**, for violations of 21 U.S.C. §846 and 18 U.S.C. §924(c).

**PROBABLE CAUSE**

3. On November 1, 2022, detectives with the Franklin County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) Special Investigations Unit (SIU), applied for and obtained a warrant in Franklin County Municipal Court for the search of 8178 Chapel Stone Road, Blacklick, Ohio (hereafter referred to as "**residence**") to search for evidence of violations of drug trafficking and drug possession laws in the State of Ohio. The warrant was signed by Franklin County Municipal Court Judge Andrea C. Peebles and is incorporated by reference.

4. On November 1, 2022 at approximately 5:37pm, officers and detectives from the FCSO executed the referenced search warrant on the **residence**. The **residence** is located within the Southern District of Ohio. Upon execution, three occupants were located inside. They were identified as **Menelik Solomon ("Solomon")**, **Teddy Asefa ("Asefa")** and **Kflegewerges Abate ("Abate")**, hereafter referred to collectively as "**occupants**". Surveillance established at

the **residence** prior to the execution of the search warrant showed **Solomon, Asefa and Abate** arrive at the **residence** in the same vehicle together and enter the **residence** together at approximately 3:56pm the same day, November 1, 2022. From that time, all three **occupants** remained inside the **residence** until the execution of the search warrant. No one else was observed coming or going from the **residence**. Your affiant knows from training and experience that drug traffickers sometimes acquire locations such as apartments, warehouses or houses to use solely as a place to store large quantities of drugs and money. These locations are sometimes referred to as "stash houses" and many times, as in this case, they are sparsely furnished because no one actually resides there.

5. Upon entry **Solomon** was observed by officers in or near the kitchen of the residence where approximately eighteen (18) large, clear plastic bags and large, black plastic trash bags found to contain approximately twenty-two (22) pounds each of suspected marijuana were located, (see photo 1). Also located in the kitchen and in the cut-out area between the kitchen and the main living area were two **loaded FN handguns** (see photo 2, 3 and 4).



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3





Photo 4

6. The other two occupants, **Asefa** and **Abate**, were located by officers in the basement of the residence where cardboard boxes and other packaging material, along with a plastic bag containing approximately one pound of suspected marijuana was located.

7. The main living area of the residence was just inside the front door. Located in that room was packaging material such as large, clear plastic bags and cardboard boxes, and a total of approximately forty-five (45) large, black plastic trash bags containing approximately twenty-two (22) pounds each of suspected marijuana (see Photos 5 and 6). Also located within that room in plain view, was a **loaded Smith and Wesson handgun** (see Photo 7).



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7

8. The garage and two of the bedrooms within the residence contained cardboard boxes and large, plastic bags like the ones located in the kitchen and main living area. These bags and boxes also contained suspected marijuana. Your affiant knows from training and experience that bales of marijuana are sometimes wrapped in multiple layers of plastic, placed inside trash or other large plastic bags, and then further placed inside boxes for concealment and shipment. The numerous cardboard boxes located in the **residence** were in various stages of unpacking. Of the seventy (70) bales of marijuana, weighing approximately twenty-two (22) pounds each, located in the **residence**, fourteen (14) bales remained packed inside shipping, or moving, boxes in the garage (see Photo 8). The other fifty-six (56) bales had been removed from the boxes and were laid out throughout the house. Your affiant knows from training and experience when bulk shipments of illegal drugs arrive at their destination for distribution, they have to be unpacked, broken down into smaller amounts and sorted so they can be sold to multiple buyers.





Photo 8

9. The incorporated state of Ohio search warrant referenced the observation by SIU detectives of a U-Haul truck arriving at the **residence** at approximately 2:20am on November 1, 2022. The U-Haul arrived with another vehicle and the driver of both vehicles began unloading boxes from the rear of the U-Haul into the garage. Once they were done unloading, both vehicles left the area. From training and experience and the facts of this investigation, your affiant knows the boxes being unloaded from the U-Haul are the same boxes that were located in the search of the **residence** and that these boxes contained bales of marijuana that needed unpacked and sorted for breaking down into smaller quantities for sale. From training and experience and the facts of this case, your affiant believes the **occupants**, who arrived together in the same vehicle and being the only people observed arriving and remaining at the **residence** after the delivery of the boxes and up until the time of the execution of the search warrant, were unpacking and sorting the bales of marijuana for distribution.

10. The total gross weight of suspected marijuana, a Schedule I Controlled Substance, contained within all packages inside the residence is approximately **1,565 pounds**. Additionally, there were approximately nine cell phones located in the residence. Your affiant knows from training and experience that drug traffickers sometimes use multiple cell phones to conduct drug trafficking business. Possessing multiple phones allows the traffickers to separate their personal business with family and friends from their drug business. Also, multiple phones aids in thwarting law enforcement investigations by making tracking and monitoring phones more difficult.

11. Your affiant has learned from a Special Agent with the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms that Smith and Wesson, and FN firearms are manufactured outside of the state of Ohio, and as such would have traveled in interstate commerce to be in the possession and control of the **occupants** who were located inside 8178 Chapel Stone Road, Blacklick, Ohio.



Your affiant knows from training and experience that drug traffickers possess firearms to protect drugs and money, as well as for their personal safety as they conduct their drug trafficking business.

### CONCLUSION

11. Based on the foregoing facts, Your affiant believes there is probable cause for the arrest of **Menelik Solomon, Teddy Asefa and Kflegewerges Abate**, for violations of 21 U.S.C. §846 and 18 U.S.C. §924(c).

I respectfully request that the warrant be issued.

Respectfully submitted,



Tisha M. Hartsough  
Special Agent  
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 2d day of November, 2022 at Newark, Ohio.

  
Elizabeth A. Preston Deavers  
United States Magistrate Judge